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'Isolation' of Watergate Prober Cox

Archibald Cox, selected as special prosecutor in the Watergate investigation, conceded yesterday that a situation might arise in which he would have to "isolate" himself from phases of the Watergate investigation because of his brother's legal relationship with Howard Hughes.

Cox's brother, Maxwell, is a principal lawyer for the billionaire industrialist who has been a long-time, generous contributor to President Nixon's campaign finances.

Cox, former solicitor general in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, said he hadn't notified Attorney General-designate Elliot L. Richardson of his brother's relationship with Hughes.

"Max' activities never entered my head," Cox said.

"I don't offhand see any problem. If there was any question, I'd have to think of how to deal with it so people know it's being handled right down the middle."

The 61-year-old Harvard law professor said he hadn't talked with his brother, a partner in the Manhattan firm of Davis and Cox, about any Hughes business, and had not discussed the appointment with him.

"I don't feel prejudiced or compromised or under any obligation to Max' clients," he said.

In 1965, when Cox was solicitor general, the massive lawsuit involving Hughes and Trans World Airlines came before the Supreme Court. Cox disqualified himself from any aspect of the case for personal reasons after his brother's work on the litigation. *L. A. Times Service*